

In re Patent Application of
Michael Houck
Serial No. 10/614,405
Filed July 7, 2003

REMARKS

Applicant herein responds to the outstanding Office action and expresses his appreciation for the Examiner's early allowance of Claims 27 and 30. Undersigned counsel apologizes, however, for the unintentional typographical errors in claims intended to be dependent from allowed claim 27. These errors have been corrected so that these dependent claims now properly refer to allowed independent claim 27. Rejected claims 39 and 40 have been cancelled.

Independent claims 1 and 13 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over the combined references of Evans (US 6,322,411) and Ersoy *et al.* (US 4,410,295). The Examiner, however, recognizes that Evans does not disclose bosses, but takes the position that since Ersoy *et al.* describe a universal joint including a ball and socket arrangement, one of ordinary skill in the art would have found the claimed invention obvious by combining the cited references.

Applicant respectfully points out that even if the Ersoy *et al.* reference describes a boss type of joint, this reference is limited to describing a spherical socket and does not mention or even suggest an elongated socket such as the slot herein disclosed and claimed. The present slot socket allows the connection more flex than permitted by the Ersoy *et al.* joint, by the boss having the capability of sliding within the slot. Neither Ersoy *et al.* nor Evans describe such a structure or its advantages.

Accordingly, Applicant suggests that even if one of ordinary skill in the art were to be able to combine the Evans and Ersoy *et al.* references, the combination would not produce the claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant believes the claimed invention is nonobvious over the cited references, and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness rejections of independent claims 1 and 13.

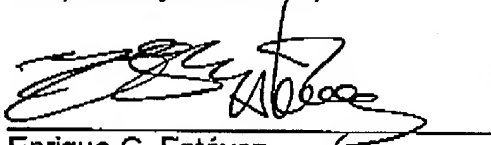
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Conclusion

In view of the amendments and the remarks presented herein, it is submitted that the pending independent claims are patentable. In addition, their respective dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features, are also patentable and require no further discussion.

If the further prosecution can be facilitated through a telephone conference between the Examiner and the undersigned, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

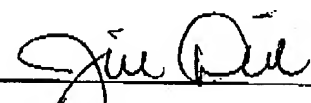


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